

this auspicious occasion with family and friends.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF THE
KOESTER CORPORATION FOR ITS
OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT TO
THE DEFIANCE COMMUNITY FOR
THE PAST THIRTY YEARS

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay special tribute to a remarkable, community-minded organization from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District—the Koester Corporation.

In 1970, guided by an unwavering commitment to quality and entrepreneurial spirit, William C. Koester founded the Koester Corporation. For the past thirty years, the Koester Corporation has been an integral part of the Defiance community, and has been a key player in the manufacturing industry in Northwest Ohio and around the world.

Through Mr. Koester's innovation and determination, the Koester Corporation has grown from the small firm of three employees he started in the early 1970's, to an industrial heavyweight with approximately sixty employees, conducting its business both domestically and in the international marketplace. Throughout its success, the Koester Corporation has maintained its presence and headquarters in Defiance for almost thirty years.

Mr. Speaker, the true greatness of American productivity and manufacturing prowess is evident from the unique history of the Koester Corporation. With great expectations and more than a little hard work, William Koester has transformed his vision into a highly successful manufacturing and process control business. With the combination of his vision and the dedication and talents of the employees at the Koester Corporation, the recipe for success is written. At the same time, Mr. Koester has maintained his commitment to the local community and has strived to succeed as a good community partner, as well.

Mr. Speaker, it has often been said that America succeeds due to the outstanding contributions of her citizens. In the case of William C. Koester and the Koester Corporation, I think that adage is very appropriate. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to the Koester Corporation. For its thirty years of service to business, industry, and the Defiance area, we offer our sincere gratitude and our best wishes for the future.

RECOGNITION OF SPEECH BY STUDENT GOVERNOR REBECCA
DESILETS UXBRIDGE HIGH
SCHOOL

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize

the superb speech delivered by Rebecca Desilets, a Senior at Uxbridge High School. Ms. Desilets was elected Student Governor for the 1999 Massachusetts Student Government Day. For the past 52 years, the high schools of Massachusetts have democratically elected student delegates to assume the roles of constitutional officers, court justices, and members of the General Court on Student Government Day. This has been a most worthwhile experiment in state government. Mr. Speaker, the speech delivered by Ms. Desilets is both eloquent and timely, and it is with great pride that I submit it for the RECORD.

Ms. Rebecca Desilets, Student Governor, Uxbridge High School. It's quite remarkable to see so many of us here in this historical chamber. I use the word remarkable because we are here as a result of an interest in government. We won our elections in our respective high schools. We took the risk and threw our hats into the ring. This is remarkable. At a time when the political talking heads have focused their attention on scandal and investigation, when TV news coverage devotes more time to a stain on a dress than to the President's many attempts to discuss Kosovo, it becomes easy to turn off, to become cynical about government and politics.

A cynicism has infiltrated our view of the political process. The very word "politics" conveys a negative connotation. Who hasn't heard the seemingly endless jokes of the late night show hosts? Is nothing sacred or off limits? No wonder there is such distrust of the American political system. No wonder there is apathy among the citizens of this nation.

In preparation for Student Government Day, I conducted a survey of my peers. This was a random sampling of the Juniors and Seniors at my high school. It is pretty safe to say that although my survey may not be 100% scientific, it is accurate enough to be a reflection of what you would find if repeated at your high school. I was trying to get a handle on how cynical our age group has become. The results were depressing to say the least. Let me give some of the findings. 75% of the respondents blamed their distrust of government on political parties, on lack of bipartisanship. 60% stated that the political scandals of late had added to their negativity. In the comment area that I provided there were some interesting opinions and observations made. The word "corruption" appeared over and over again as an explanation for the pessimism toward government. Perhaps even more significantly, many students attributed their distrust to the media. Specifically, the press was blamed for focusing on the worst case scenarios of political blunder and bad behavior. One responder said that politicians were more concerned with the "power prize" than with the common good, the good of the American people. Politicians are viewed by many as motivated by self-interest rather than the good of the people they represent.

What is the cause of this cynicism? Of course, some of it comes from politicians and the political party system. Our forefathers were right to have a fear of party politics, of faction. It is also a result of an unrestrained press and the race for great ratings.

It is up to us to reduce the effects of cynicism. However, we can't nor should we eliminate it. A healthy skepticism is a good thing, no doubt. But how can we make sure that voters don't get so turned off that they stay away from the polls, that they simply do not participate in this democracy?

As you probably know, last November's election had one of the lowest turnouts ever. Sure we can rationalize and blame it on the candidates. You know those people who say "I didn't vote because I didn't like either candidate"; or the oldest excuse "I didn't vote because my vote doesn't really make a difference."

Adlai Stevenson, a Governor of Illinois and a presidential candidate in the 1950s, said: "As citizens of this American democracy, you are the rulers and the ruled, the law-givers and the law-abiding, the beginning and the end." Stevenson was right. We do have an active role to play as citizens of our towns or cities, state, and country. We have rights but also responsibilities.

I know that this room is filled with people who are interested. We care about capital punishment, health care, and education. We may be somewhat cynical but this doesn't stop us from knowing what is at stake in Kosovo.

We are the voters who will decide the issues of the 21st Century. Some of us will be the policy makers of the new millennium. Let us send the message, as we are in a small way just by being here, that cynicism will not keep us from our responsibilities as citizens. In fact, let us be the ones that replace cynicism with healthy skepticism. Jay Leno may make us laugh, he will not turn us off. The Drudge Report can contain sensational gossip, but it won't keep us away from the polls. There may be scandal and corruption but some of us will still consider politics as honorable and public service a privilege.

TRIBUTE TO THE PUEBLO PACHYDERM CLUB

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the Pueblo Pachyderm Club of Pueblo, Colorado for its outstanding leadership and years of exemplary service to the local community.

This patriotic association brings together common citizens to discuss and consider a wide spectrum of political topics both national and local in scope.

Colorado Governor Bill Owens last month proclaimed April 20, 1999 Pueblo Pachyderm Day in the State of Colorado. In honor of this recognition, I hereby submit for the RECORD a copy of the Governor's declaration.

STATE OF COLORADO, HONORARY PROCLAMATION—PUEBLO PACHYDERM DAY APRIL 20, 1999

Whereas, the organization represents a unique concept for political clubs by being patterned after the weekly meeting type luncheon clubs, with programs centered around political and governmental affairs; and

Whereas, the Pueblo Pachyderm Club promotes the development of future political leaders and citizen participation as embodied in their motto, "Free Government Requires Active Citizens," and is open to both male and female members; and

Whereas, the Pachyderm Clubs promote better government through club programs and meetings open to the public, providing scholarships for political science students,

sponsoring campaign workshops and encouraging awareness of political affairs;

Now, Therefore, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby proclaim April 20, 1999, as Pueblo Pachyderm Day in the State of Colorado.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this tenth day of March 1999.

BILL OWENS *Governor.*

A FEW OUTSTANDING WOMEN

HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand before the House of Representatives today and acknowledge the tremendous contributions of the women of the sixth congressional district of Georgia to our state and nation. In particular I want to acknowledge the contributions of women in business.

The growth and economic prosperity of Georgia's economy has been paralleled by the growth of Women-Owned Businesses and Enterprises. Their contributions have provided quality jobs, innovative services, and new products for Georgia.

I am very pleased to inform you that Georgia is now the second fastest growing state in America in terms of women business owners. For just a moment I would like to tell you about a few of these outstanding women.

Carolyn Stradley, the founder and owner of C and S Paving in Marietta, Georgia is a true success story. Orphaned as a child and a school dropout as a teenager, Carolyn founded her business with a shovel and determination. Today she sits on the National Women's Business Council, and is one of Georgia's leading contractors.

Jane Carithers, along with her husband Larry, owns and operates the successful Carithers Florist in Marietta, Georgia. Jane is Georgia's leading florist and an innovator in her field. She initiated the use of flowers and floral arrangements for business promotion, office interiors, and community benefits. Even while reaching the heights of her profession, she still commits time and resources to many community events and programs.

Jackie Ward, founder of Computer Generations, is one of North America's leading developers of computer technology and services to corporate America. Jackie has created jobs for thousands of men and women in Georgia and the United States. While building her business she has also worked to bring business to Georgia by serving as the first woman President in the history of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce.

So many women in so many ways are growing Georgia's economy. Women in real estate like Pat DiGeorge, Mitzi Jaznicki, Mary Ann Anziano, Gail Hurst, Sandra Eades, Shirley Hardman, and Annie Parker. Women in homebuilding like Kay Cantrell, and in new home marketing like Bea McDowell. Women in commercial planning and design like Bianca Quantrell, and women in economic development like Annie Hunt Burrus.

I could acknowledge so many more for all they have done and contributed to Georgia. I

am very pleased that the Congressional Caucus for Women's issues has chosen to acknowledge the contribution of women, and I am pleased to recognize the tremendous contribution of women in business throughout the sixth district of Georgia.

SIKH MARCH FOR BAISAKHI SUPPORTS FREE KHALISTAN

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure to attend the Khalsa March this past Saturday. The March celebrated the 300th anniversary of the Sikh Nation. Over 40,000 people from all over America attended this special event. I thank my friend Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, for inviting me to this auspicious occasion.

There are 22 million Sikhs in the world and nearly 500,000 here in the United States. They have enriched American life in almost every walk of life, including law, farming, medicine and many other. I was interested in learning that a Sikh named Dalip Singh Saund even served in the U.S. Congress. I would like to take this opportunity to salute their contributions to this country.

Mr. Speaker, the March was truly a success. There was a tremendous amount of excitement in the air, as they celebrated their heritage of freedom and showed their support for regaining their lost sovereignty in an independent homeland they call khalistan. Their struggle against the oppression that the Indian government inflicts on them should be supported by every American and by those who support freedom around the globe.

Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan has issued a press release about the March. I would like to place this press release into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues.

[From the Council of Khalistan, April 12, 1999]

KHALSA MARCH VERY SUCCESSFUL—OVER 40,000 SIKHS COME TO WASHINGTON, DC TO CELEBRATE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHALSA PANTH

WASHINGTON, DC, APRIL 12.—Over 40,000 Sikhs, more than twice as many as expected, came to Washington, D.C. on Saturday, April 10 to participate in Khalsa March 1999, celebrating the 300th anniversary of the day that Guru Gobind Singh baptized the Sikh Nation. It was the first time that so many Sikh gathered in the Nation's Capital. A sea of saffron turbans and scarves could be seen around the Reflecting Pool. There are 22 million Sikhs world wide and about 500,000 here in the United States.

The mood of attendees was jubilant and excited as they celebrated the Sikh heritage. The celebration began in front of the Lincoln Memorial, which is a symbol of freedom, and the participants marched to the U.S. Capitol. The stage displayed pictures of Guru Gobind Singh Baptizing the Panj Pyaras (the Five Beloved Ones), depictions of Gurdwara Kesgarh Sahib, the birthplace of the Sikh Nation, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the holiest Sikh shrine, other major events in

Sikh history, and banners with slogans like "Indian Free Khalistan", "Long Live Khalistan", etc.

"Guru Gobind Singh gave the Sikh Nation a heritage of freedom," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, the coordinator of the march. "Today we had a joyous celebration of that heritage," he said. "Now we must dedicate ourselves to freeing our homeland, Khalistan."

Participants in the march celebrated with family and friends and raised slogans. They carried banners that said "India Free Khalistan," "Long Live Khalistan," and "Raj Karega Khalsa." There was a float bearing a replica of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the holiest of Sikh shrines, and another promoting "Khalistan—the Sikh Nation on the Move."

Speakers included dignitaries from Punjab, Khalistan like Justice Ajit Singh Bains, chairman of the Punjab Human Rights Organization (PHRO), and retired General Narinder Singh, as well as U.S. Congress Dan Burton (R-Ind.), Dr. Walter Landry, Executive Director of the Think-Tank for National Self-Determination, representatives of Sikh women and youth, and others.

Justice Bains discussed the genocide and human-rights violations that the Indian government has committed against the Sikh Nation since 1984. He said that there is no rule of law in Punjab. He pointed out the Indian government's policy of mass cremations of Sikhs, which the Indian supreme Court called "worse than a genocide."

General Narinder Singh spoke of the sovereignty of the Sikh Nation. He noted that Guru Gobind Singh gave the Sikh Nation sovereignty and that this sovereignty is part of the Khalsa birthright. He said that there is no reason why the Khalsa Panth should not have sovereignty.

Congressman Burton offered his continued support for the Sikh cause. He spoke against the Indian government's atrocities against Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, and other minorities. He urged that the United States stop supporting the Indian government. He said that Sikhs should have their freedom and that the United States should support it. Many other Members of Congress sent their greetings, including House Minority Leader David Bonior (D-Mich.), Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV), and others.

Mayor Anthony Williams of Washington, D.C. sent a message of congratulations. He wrote, "It is my distinct pleasure to extend warm greetings and congratulations to the members, guests and friends of the Council of Khalistan as you celebrate your 300th anniversary of the initiation of the Khalsa Panth. This is a significant milestone in the history of the world's religions as you celebrate Vaisakhee Day." Mayor Williams added that "you are to be congratulated for your efforts to provide spiritual enhancement to the principles of peace, prosperity, dignity, integrity, human rights and justice for all."

Dr. Paramjit Singh Ajrawat, the Secretary of the march and Master of Ceremonies at the Lincoln Memorial, reminded the audience that Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa and recognized the whole human race as equal, including gender equality. He noted that Abraham Lincoln also worked to end slavery.

Attendees passed resolutions to reiterate their support for a free Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that was declared independent on October 7, 1987; to honor Sikh martyrs; to ask the Indian government to release the tens of thousands of Sikh political prisoners